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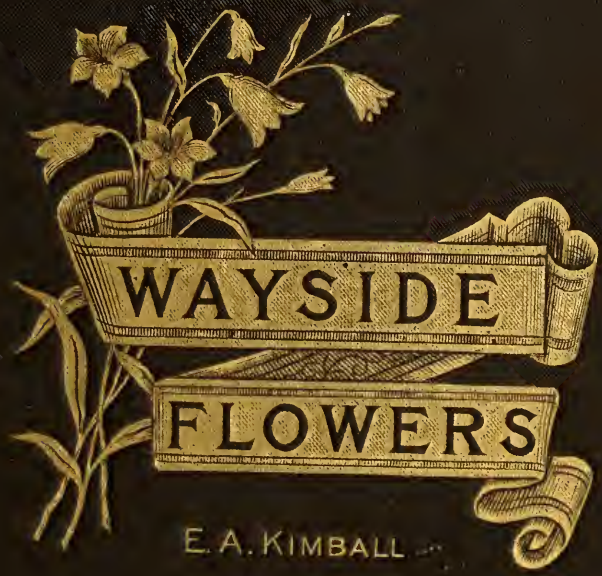

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WAYSIDE FLOWERS.

THE OLD HOUSE O'ER THE WAY. Page 119.

WAYSIDE FLOWERS

BY
E. A. KIMBALL

PORTLAND, ME.
HOYT, FOGG & DONHAM
1882

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THE SHADY SIDE.

I followed a little brook
  Along its winding way,
Around by the woody hill,
  One quiet Sabbath day.
'Twas winter, and here and there
  Lay drifts of whitest snow;
And icicles from the trees
  Hung, in a sparkling row.

As adown the mossy rocks,
  With careful steps I went,
By roots of an aged tree,
  Tangled, knotted, and bent,
I saw green, beautiful ferns,
  Unharmed by winter's blast;
On the shady bank they grew,
  And limpid ripples passed.

Oh, ever along life's stream,
For ferns, so green and fair,
I'll look on the shady side,
Among the roots of care.
The purest and sweetest thoughts
Spring from ashes of woe;
On the shady bank of life,
The ferns and mosses grow.

MERRIMAC.

O river, fair river!
  Your waters free,
Go dashing and flashing
  Down to the sea.

O river, calm river!
  Peaceful and still,
Now sliding and gliding
  By vale and hill.

O river, true mirror
  Of sky and earth,
Collecting, reflecting,
  Beauty and worth.

O river, glad river!
  Your little waves
Are glancing and dancing
  By new made graves.

O river, brave river!
You heed no shock;
Rebounding, then rounding
The mighty rock.

O river, wise river!
By town and lea
Flow, preaching and teaching,
Down to the sea.

RYE BEACH.

Home of my childhood! backward to thee
Memory wanders. There by the sea,—
Lashed by its billows, that crash and roar,
Breaking against huge rocks on thy shore,
Foaming, and tossing its silver spray,
Sighing and moaning by night and day,
Dashing its sea-weed on the smooth beach,
Leaving its shells on the sand to bleach,
Catching the sunbeams' luminous flash,
Kissed by fair moonbeams, its surges dash;
Bearing the fisherman's boat so frail,
And stately ships that gallantly sail,
Singing a dirge for the loved and lost,
Far, far beneath, by its currents tost,—
Lying in beauty, peaceful and calm,
By gray stones walled, is many a farm
Fruitful and fair; no thistle or weed
Is ever allowed to run to seed.

Thy murmuring brooks by rocks of flint,
Cardinal flower and peppermint,
The lovely ponds where white lilies blow,
The woods where spruce and lofty pine grow,
The harbor, its boats and buzzing mill,
The naked trunks on Breakfast Hill,
The large hotels and cottages fair,
The bathers, rending with shouts the air,
As a breaker strikes them unawares,
Nor reveres the man of hoary hairs,
For men of sixty, children of nine,
Come screaming out of the drenching brine.
The path I trod, on my way to school,
Across the marsh, and through pastures cool.
By the little yard where green grass waves
Above my father's and mother's graves;—
All, all come back to my mind to-day,
And I seem again a child at play.
I see the faces I used to know,
Like breath of clover, they come and go.
Ah! many have passed from earth away,
They travel no more life's weary way.
Home of my childhood! dear unto me,
Lashed by the waves of the surging sea.

SABBATH BELLS.

Borne on the morning breeze,
O'er leafless trees,
Comes sound of Sabbath bells,
Pealing, softly stealing,
Gone.

Now, wafted loud and clear,
From steeples near
A hearty welcome rings,
Inviting, nor slighting
One.

Now soft, and sweet and low,
Like gentle flow
Of rills, come pleasing chimes,
Singing, gladly ringing
Praise.

Now, like an organ grand
Or martial band,
The wondrous music swells,
Resounding, in rounding
Tones.

Now, angel voices clear
Methinks I hear
Around the Heav'nly throne,
Raising anthems, praising
God.

Ring, ye joyful bells, ring,
Your pean sing
Whene'er my weary soul
Receding, goes speeding
Home.

FRIZZLES.

As I go up and down the street,
I notice ladies that I meet
Wear frizzles.

Here comes a woman short and fat,
From underneath her black straw hat,
Hang frizzles.

And just behind her, tall and lean,
A school-girl comes, just sweet sixteen,
With frizzles.

And now, a pretty mincing belle:
Soft, fickle; they become her well,
Those frizzles.

One, stately, pure, is passing now;
Why will she wear on that true brow
False frizzles?

And one whose cheeks have lost their tint,
Is coming, in an eight-cent print
And frizzles.

A costly silk now rustles by,
A velvet cloak and crimson tie,
And frizzles.

Old ladies, girls, the plain, the fair,
With ev'ry hue and shade of hair
Have frizzles.

No matter whether round or thin,
To go without must be a sin!
No frizzles?

I think the men might wear them too,
When holding plough or making shoe,
Those frizzles.

Imagine Rev'rend Beecher Burch,
Next Sabbath in his spacious church,
In frizzles!

The Doctor driving in his gig,
And on his head a clumsy wig
Of frizzles.

The plague has spread so far and wide,
I fear it always will abide;
The frizzles.

Unless be found some wondrous charm
In fashion-plates, a healing balm
For frizzles.

EVENING.

Oh, so soft, yet so bright,
This peaceful moonlight,
  Robing earth in silver sheen!
Through invisible air,
Pure, wondrously fair,
  The glistening moonbeams stream.

And so fleecy and white,
So airy and light,
  Are the graceful clouds at play,
As between earth and sky
They slowly go by
  And daintily float away.

And the feathery snow
On the ground below
  Is a garment fresh and clean,
On the hill, in the lane,

Without spot or stain,
Like an angel's robe, I ween.

And so softly the breeze
Trills through the bare trees,
The music comes sweet and low,
As tall, solemn, they stand,
And with trembling hand,
Their shadows write on the snow.

Wafted now to my ear,
In tones rich and clear,
Are hymns from the praying band,
As together they sing,
And praise the Great King
Who ruleth o'er sea and land.

And my soul seems to rise
In bliss to the skies,
As they sing the songs I love.
But the sweet voices cease,
And a heav'nly peace
Fills all my heart from above.

COMING.

She is coming, I know,
The breeze told me so,
As beneath an oak I sat,
And the faded brown leaves
Dropped down from the trees,
And spread for my feet a mat.

She is coming, I know,
The brook told me so,
And onward its bubbles glanced;
As it rippled along
It sang a glad song,
And over its pebbles danced.

She is coming, I know,
The woodchuck said so,
And into his hole he went,
'Neath the roots of a tree,

O, merry was he,
And joy to my heart he sent.

She is coming, I know,
The robin said so,
And caroled his sweetest tune;
Then the wild duck flew by,
And a butterfly
Came out to see if 'twas June.

She is coming, I know!
Blow, warm breezes, blow,
Rain down soft-falling showers!
O, make haste, lovely Spring,
Your bobolinks bring,
And deck the fields with flowers.

THE CARES OF THE WORLD.

Alone, at close of summer day,
Alone she knelt in her room to pray.
The flesh was weak, her heart was sad,
Her soul in robe of darkness was clad.

All day the weary, toiling wife
Had borne the burden of busy life;
And rough the path her feet had trod,—
Rocks, thorns, tangled roots, uneven sod.

With tearful eyes she knelt to pray,
Alone at close of the toilsome day;
And as she knelt, a voice she heard,
A calm voice whispered, "They choke the word.

"The cares of earth, like thistles, spring
Among the wheat, and but sorrow bring.
It cannot grow 'mong noxious weeds,
And bear ripe fruit, Christian words and deeds.

"My erring child I long have sought;
Long, long have you spent your strength for naught;
I made you feel the chast'ning rod,
For the world was crowding out your God.

"Throw off, my child, that load of care,
No longer those heavy burdens bear."
"Father, forgive!" she humbly cried,
"Forgive the sins of Thy erring child!

"I bow submissive, kiss the rod,
Lay down my burdens, take back my God.
Come, peaceful Spirit, from above,
O, let me feel Thy pardoning love!

"O, cleanse my heart from ev'ry sin,
And make me whiter than snow, within."
The Father heard her earnest cry,
He answered the penitential sigh.

He bade her, "Go, and sin no more,
But onward press to the heav'nly shore.
Let not earth's thistles choke the right,
My yoke is easy, my burden light."

WHEN BLESSINGS FAIL.

When blessings fail, life, like a tree
When stript of leaves, may seem to be
At first, devoid of beauty;
But much of beauty still remains,
If we but smile at little pains,
And bravely do our duty.

THE "IRON LANCE."

Written after reading "Rambles in Martinique," Harper's Magazine for January, 1874.

Away from the north wind cold and bleak,
In the lovely isle of Martinique,
Where towering mountains rugged rise
From surging ocean to sunny skies,
From whose summits high, wild waters dash
Through deep ravines, with silvery flash,
And o'er naked cliffs mad torrents leap,
And onward rush to the mighty deep;

Encircled by hills all green and fair,
Near the charming town of St. Pierre,
Is a garden vale; a quiet place,
Where flowers of palm trees interlace,
And dark green leaves of the mango shake,
As the zephyrs waft across the lake
The fragrance sweet of orange and lime,
While softly below the ripples chime.

Wherever green boughs and grasses meet,
Forming a shady and cool retreat,
In arbors along the calm lake's shore,
With tamarind branches bending o'er,
Along the banks of the limpid stream,
Where the crystal bubbles glance and gleam,
Wherever the leaves in shadow dance,
There lurks the venomous "iron lance";

And woe to him, who, by day or night,
Feels the crawling viper's poison bite.
O, the world is full of vales like this,
Where nothing seems to the youth amiss,
Where trees of happiness fruit bestow,
And flowers of pleasure bloom below,
Where joy and mirth o'er life's waters glance,
But,—ever there lurks the "iron lance."

When he holds the wine-cup to his lips,
'Mid laughter and mirth the liquid sips,
When alluring beauty bids him stay,
And his feet would linger in the way,

Where music calls to the merry dance,
O, then and there is the "iron lance."
Each charming spot it lurks within,
A deadly serpent,—the viper sin.

POCKETS.

All over the land, in country or town,
Nine men out of ten, from the President down,
Have their hands in their breeches pockets.

The merchant comes out of his palace store,
As soon as his coat-tails are clear of the door,
Down his hands go into his pockets.

The statesman, with diamond pin in his shirt,
And the Irish teamster all covered with dirt,
Stop to rest with hands in their pockets.

The shoemaker throws down apron and last,
And home to his dinner is hurrying past
With his hands in his trowsers pockets.

The perfumed fop with cigar in his mouth,
And the grey millionaire of the sunny south,
Walk out with hands in their pockets.

Perhaps 'tis a fashion that ne'er grows old,
'Tis always the same, in hot weather or cold,
All hands buried deep in the pockets.

Would it not have been an excellent thing,
If the "Boss" and others, of "Tammany Ring,"
Had *kept* all their hands in their pockets?

If the would-be murderer, clasping knife
Or pistol, intending to take away life,
Would put both his hands in his pockets,—

The drunkard, when longing to take a drink,
Would let both his hands very quietly sink,
And stay there,—down deep in his pockets,

Soon crime would vanish away from the world,
The fair temperance banner be unfurled,
And policemen's hands in their pockets.

NO FRETTING IN HEAVEN.

We all have burdens to bear,
Troubles, losses, heavy crosses,
Dark clouds o'er our pathway drifting,
Thunders crashing, lightnings flashing,
And God's grace the soul uplifting,
Chaff from out the pure grain sifting,
Through tears, heartache and care.

Then murmur not, when dreary
Your pathway lies 'neath gloomy skies;
Fretting makes no burden lighter,
Brings no gladness, only sadness.
Fretting makes your robe no whiter,
Fretting makes your crown no brighter,
Gives no rest when weary.

But those you love, at even
May long for rest in mansions blest,
Where fretting will sadden never

Their happy lot. O, then, fret not!
Remember, while yet together,
Death soon loving friends may sever,
And none will fret in heav'n.

A MOTHER'S PRAYER.

Father! by faith I bring my child to Thee,
And thank Thee for the gift Thou gavest me,
And ask for wisdom, patience, and Thy light,
To teach my little one to love the right.

O, may he early learn to love Thy Book,
And early to my Blessed Jesus look,
Nor shun the cross, but work with willing heart,
And others lead to choose the better part.

I know the world is full of wickedness.
Dear Saviour! Thou wast once a boy, O, bless
This little boy of mine, keep him from sin;
Knock at his heart till he shall let Thee in.

Into his future life I cannot see.
'Tis well, I hope, and leave it all with Thee.
O, Holy Spirit, dwell my heart within,
That I, to Christ, his precious soul may win!

Or, if my race of life be nearly run,
Still I can say, Thy will, not mine, be done.
I know Thou over-rulest all for good,
Thou givest to the sparrows daily food,—

And Thou wilt care for him, my little boy.
I trust Thee, and find comfort, peace and joy;
For Thou art love. I thank Thee once again,
That I can feel Thy way is best. Amen.

MY FAVORITES.

I love the moss, the velvet moss,
Gold-green interwoven with brown;
In the woody dell it loves to dwell,
Away from the noisy town.

I love the fragrant pink and white
Arbutus, first flower of spring;
Down under the snow the sweet buds grow,
When the birds begin to sing.

I love the lowly running vine,
With light-veined, heart-shaped, glossy leaves,
With its blossoms white, and berries bright,
Nestling close to roots of trees.

I love the graceful, waving fern,
And the modest violet blue,
O, there's none too small! God made them all,
And giveth to each its hue.

A Father's care, a Father's love,
I can read on every leaf.
He sendeth the rain, He gives the grain,
And He knows our inmost grief.

ON STAR ISLAND.

With aching heart on the rocks I stand,
And mourn for one* of our happy band,
Who sailed with us o'er the summer sea,
Whose laugh and song were joyous and free.

We roamed o'er the isle, with nimble feet,
We thought not of death, life seemed so sweet,
We heard not the ocean's solemn moan,—
I hear it now as I stand alone.

O cold, treacherous, tidal wave!
O cruel, cruel sea!
You may sparkle and dash
With brilliant flash,
But methinks my schoolmate I see,
Lying cold, pale and dead,
In her rock-weed bed,

*Miss Varrell of Rye, who was washed from Miss Underhill's chair, by a tidal wave.

While the west wind sobs o'er the main,
Telling of grief and pain,
In her home on the shore,
Where, forevermore,
They will long for her love in vain.

O schoolmate! strange that you should be
Tost by the currents of the sea,
While I stand here alone to-day,
And wipe the falling tears away.

We roved in woods and meadows gay
With flowers, raked the new-mown hay,
Picked berries, gathered violets
From dewy grass by rivulets.

O cold, treacherous, tidal wave!
O cruel, cruel sea!
You may sparkle and dash
With brilliant flash,
But methinks my schoolmate I see,
Lying cold, pale and dead,
In her rock-weed bed,
While the west wind sobs o'er the sea!

IN THE WOODS.

Through the grassy lane I roam,
Catching glimpse of sail and foam,
  To the green woods yonder lying,
And the murmur of the sea,
Song of bird and hum of bee,
  Blend with zephyrs softly sighing.

Lovely woods of pine and spruce,
Cones and tassels scattered loose
  Over rocks and massive ledges;
And the slender grasses nod,
Graceful ferns and golden rod
  Wave between the granite edges.

Soft green carpet underneath,
Wrought in cluster, spray and wreath,
  Through the moss, the partridge twining,
And the lilies frail and white,
Droop o'er scarlet berries bright,
  On the light-veined leaves reclining.

Roots uptorn by winter's blast,
With red lichens clinging fast;
  Tiny cups and cunning vases
And long fringes hid away
On old branches, brown and gray,
  In the quiet, shady places.

Here the sweetest roses blow,
Berries in abundance grow,
  Under branches gently swaying.
Fragrance wafted on the air
Comes to me from meadows fair,
  Where the laborers are haying.

Rest and peace I seek to-day,
Fling each earthly care away,
  Gather berries, vines and flowers,
Watch the squirrels frisk about
On the branches, in and out
  Through the pleasant, leafy bowers.

O, these woods to me are dear,
For I know that God is here!
  Ev'ry thing his wisdom showeth;

Lowly moss and rugged pine,
Solid rock and creeping vine,
E'en the grass the west wind bloweth.

At His throne my spirit kneels;
Peace into my bosom steals.
"Father! keep me meek and and lowly,
Lead me in the narrow way,
Never let me from Thee stray,
Help me to be pure and holy!

"Oft my heart is faint and sore,
And I want to love Thee more.
Let me no unkindness cherish,
Teach me daily how to live,
Help me others to forgive,
Let the poison weeds all perish!

"Thanks to Thee for all I see;
Beauty brings me near to Thee!"
And my heart, in bliss replying
To the murmur of the sea,
Song of bird and hum of bee,
Ceases all its bitter crying.

THE CARDINAL FLOWER.

The brook winds through the meadow,
  In the tangled copse it hides
A moment, in the shadow,
  Then under the bridge it glides,
And flows by the rock to a vine-wreathed bower,
To bathe the feet of the cardinal flower,
And reflect the intensely red raceme
Of the gorgeous plant of the crystal stream.

Where the shallow ripples flow,
  And the rushes interlace,
She saw it brilliantly glow,
  I plucked it for her, my Grace.
Long ago, for my darling wife, now at rest;
Of all native blossoms, she loved this the best.
O, well I remember that August day,
The last time that ever we rode this way!

HAREBELLS.

Harebells, I have found you,
Swinging in the breeze,
Fragrant herbs around you,
Under maple trees!

All your stems so slender,
With their leafy fringe,
Sunbeams warm and tender,
Give a golden tinge!

When you lift your faces,
Does the falling dew
Note your silent graces,
Pretty cups of blue?

Modest little harebell,
Won't you look at me?
Don't you know I love well
Your sweet purity?

Nature has not stinted
You in point of hue;
Beautifully tinted,
Dark veins running through!

You've a gentle sweetness
With a lofty mien,
Delicate completeness,
Lowly, yet a queen!

Wave within your bower,
Graceful little bell;
Of a charming flower
That I love, I'll tell.

Dignified, yet lowly,
Modest, kind and true,
Striving to be holy,
Aiming good to do.

Bluebell, you remind me
Of her, I am sure!
Sweet the ties that bind me
To this blossom pure.

She, a gentle magnet,
  Draws the tender rays
Of love's sunshine round her,
  By her winning ways.

Home is made a bower
  By her cheerful care;
She, the queenly flower,
  Sways her scepter there.

THAT CAT.

She came one day, with sorrowful wail,
A black and white cat, with spotted tail;
For the baby's sake I let her stay,
But wish her a thousand miles away.

Ten minutes ago she made a jump,
Down went my plants with a crashing thump;
I saved the fragments of this and that,
And wished somebody would kill that cat.

The other day I heard a clatter;
Found on the floor my turkey platter
All gone to smash, and that wicked thief,
Stuffing herself with five pounds of beef.

One night, I had just begun to doze,
That hateful cat walked over my nose,
And marched around over quilt and sheet,
And left the tracks of her muddy feet.

On the kitchen lounge has sharpened claws,
Till the covering is full of flaws;
And out in the shed, behind the door,
Scratching and mewing, are kittens four.

I think of it all with aching heart,
And think that the cat and I must part.
Will some good woman who never frets,
And has a hankering after pets,

And cherishes cats with love untold,
Take them? She's welcome. I will not scold.
The baby loves her? Well, yes, I know;
After all, I hate to have her go.

He will miss her if she goes away.
I don't want her, but the cat may stay.

SEPTEMBER.

The gleaming sunbeams quiver
On the wavelets of the river,
And western gold and zenith blue
Are so completely blended,
I know not where the gold begins,
Or where the blue is ended.

So Summer mingles with Fall.
Unfolding its feathery ball
Of smoke, the clematis rambles
By fields of corn and clover,
And harebells swing beside the wall,
The wax-work straggles over.

The gentian blooms by the rill,
The purple aster on the hill,
The valley is a gorgeous sea,
With vari'gated billows,
Where red and golden maples blaze
Among green oaks and willows.

Branches with their fruitful load,
Are bending o'er the dusty road,
In the orchard and the forest
Rich, warbled notes are ringing,
And crickets in the meadow grass,
From blade to seed are springing.

Purple haze above the pond,
Half hides the woody slope beyond,
Where waves the summer golden-rod,
In graceful, showy masses,
And where the crimson sumach glows
Above the withered grasses.

O Summer, can you not stay?
Dear songsters, will you fly away?
O sweet wild-flowers, must you die?
I fain would have you linger,
But fairest flowers first are touched
By Autumn's icy finger.

The birds will soon take their flight,
And chilling winds the buds will blight;

Shall we not then more highly prize
The cheering sunshine given?
So when our earthly joys depart,
We think the more of heaven.

Our need the Father knows best,
We labor, and He gives us rest.
We leave the footsteps of our Lord,
While seeking worldly pleasures,
He sends an angel in disguise,
To show us priceless treasures.

Find I no dividing line
Between the Fall and Summer-time,
So I would have my heav'nly joys
With these completely blended,
And have my future life begin,
Before this life is ended.

FREDDY.

A mother watched two little feet
Go swiftly down the village street;

A little frock with buttons new,
A cap on curls of golden hue.

The mother watched her blue-eyed boy,
With eyes that told her heart's deep joy,

As off he ran, that sunny day,
With pretty Bessie Green to play.

She heard the rustling of the leaves
O'erhead, against the cottage eaves.

She saw the purple pansy meek,
With tears upon its velvet cheek,

Verbena, mignonette and phlox,
Droop o'er the narrow garden walks.

"The flow'rs are sad to-day," she said,
"The breeze seems moaning for the dead.

"September smiles, but ah! I fear
The blighting frost will soon be here.

"The wind through leafless trees will sigh,
The lovely flowers soon must die."

Alas! the mother's words were true;—
The death-frost touched her spirit too.

The little feet no more were seen
Lightly to press the village green.

She called her darling boy in vain
Through days of anguish, nights of pain.

Under a tree, among the flow'rs,
He played with Bessie two long hours,

Then said, "Goodbye," and all alone,
Went through the gateway, started home.

They knew no more. In vain they sought.
The weeks rolled on,—the boy was not!

"He will not come," the mother said;
"My child, my only boy, is dead!"

When late October robed in brown
The lofty trees, all loaded down

With nuts, and squirrels frisked about,
And boys, with laugh and merry shout,

Filled bags and baskets, one had said,
"We may, perhaps, find little Fred."

And trudging through black mud and sand,
Beside a ditch in meadow land,

A gleaming button caught his eye;
"Why! that was Freddy's!" and a cry

Of mingled joy and grief he gave,
For he had found poor Freddy's grave.

With throbbing heart and trembling hand,
He knelt, and scraped away the sand.

Awe-stricken stood his mates around,
Tears fell, but lips gave forth no sound.

O small brown hands, O sunny hair!
O precious one, so young, so fair!

They bore the little form away,
And laid it where the zephyrs play,

Among the blossoms, rich and rare,
Whose fragrance fills the summer air;

And sad-eyed velvet pansy weeps
Above the grave, where Freddy sleeps.

DEAD LEAVES.

Silently flows the brook to-day,
Over the dead leaves mixed with clay,
Leaves that were green the other day.

Leaves of crimson, russet and gold,
Autumn robe of the lovely wold
Faded and rumpled, tattered, old,

Heaped in corners, and whirled at will
Of th' cruel north wind, sharp and chill,
That shrieks around the woody hill,

As he who robs a maiden's heart
Of love, and through it thrusts a dart,
Well pleased that he has caused the smart,

So howls the wind through tree-tops bare,
Laughing, because no leaves are there;
Leaves that are dying otherwhere.

The limpid brook sings not to-day;
It only whispers of decay,
Then slowly, softly, glides away.

O withered leaves! to me you seem
Like lost hopes sunken in life's stream;
The crumpled fragments of a dream,

That blown about and scattered wide,
And floating on love's ebbing tide,
No longer in the heart abide.

The years pass on. Love is the same,
The hopes, the fears and bliss remain,
And lovers only change in name.

The leaves may fall, the dreams may go,
But through eternity, we know
The sea of love shall ebb and flow.

NOVEMBER.

There are five seasons, November is the last,
The Lamentation of the year.
The wold and toft their withered leaves have cast,
And earth and sky are drear,
Each raindrop is a tear.

There were five children; three brothers, sisters two,
And all are dead but one. Alone
He lies in anguish, upon a bed of rue,
And maketh ceaseless moan
In low, sad monotone

Through all the dismal night. Above the leaden main,
When slowly creeps the tardy morn,
No ray of comfort shines through clouds of pain;
There is no sunlit dawn
For him, the sad forlorn.

Adown the valley, the west wind whistles shrill,
And fiercely does the north wind blow,
And madly raves and shrieks the east wind chill,
Now, wailing as they go,
Now, sobbing out their woe.

Dead are four seasons. November lingers, ill,
But he has heard Death's solemn call,
Soon will the children five be lying still;
And snowflakes cover all,
With an unspotted pall.

PANSY.

She sat on a mossy hassock,
  Dead leaves all around her lay,
I stood by a tree, and between us
  Ran the stream on its winding way.
Her voice was like the melody
  Of the softly flowing brook,
And her eyes revealed the purity
  Of her heart in every look.

She seemed like a dark-eyed pansy,
  Where purple and amber meet,
Grace, sweetness and dignity blended,
  And I deemed her a woman complete.
Unconscious of her loveliness,
  My elegant Pansy sat,
Till the birches trembled with happiness,
  And a hazel bough kissed her hat.

Her small brown glove the shield-fern kissed,
And the mosses kissed her feet,
And through the ravine a sunbeam glanced
With a kiss for her red lips sweet.
Respectfully, with mute caress,
Did zephyrs touch cheek and brow,
The maple outspread its hands to bless,
A chickadee sang on the bough.

Now, as I tread the narrow path,
That skirts the tangled ravine,
I think I hear gentle voices call
For their beautiful dark-eyed queen;
And I my voice with theirs unite,
For I love their graceful friend,
And again our Pansy we invite
To come to the mossy bend.

NETTLES.

Through all the Summer and the Fall,
A nettle stood beside the wall,
An ugly nettle, lean and tall;
I pitied, touched the lonely thing,
And learned its mission was to sting.

The momentary smart was keen,
But sharper is the sting, I ween,
Of bitter word, and scornful mien.
No contact needs the nettle lance
That can be given in a glance.

From heart and eye to eye and heart,
There flashes an electric dart
Invisible; it does impart
The truth, and soul may surely know,
The friendly soul from soul of foe.

Some nettles rank, more than their share
Of piercing stings about them bear,
And use them always, ev'rywhere,
And oft the chain of friendship break;
And tears must fall, and hearts must ache.

Some nettles use the sting at home,
To keep the household in a foam,
And would conceal it when they roam;
But find the wearing of the mask,
Is not a very easy task.

Sometimes the prickles needful are,
Intruders from the heart to bar,
When they its purity would mar.
But thorny nettles should beware,
How they the hearts of others tear.

SUNSET.

Written for the golden wedding of Dea. and Mrs. James Davis, March 23, 1875.

The longest life is like a summer day,
So swiftly do its moments glide away.
The eastern sky of amber-colored light,
Where softly gleams the splendid morning star,
Soon turns to rosy hues more fair and bright,
And blushing ocean, river, brook and mar,
Reflect the glory of the early dawn,
The lambent glory of the crimson morn.

So the dim hopes of childhood brighter grow,
And ever with increasing luster glow
Through youth, till the roseate sky of love
Imparts a glory to all common things,
And common things reflect the light above,
So wondrous is the charm of love, that brings
Two hearts into communion sacred, sweet,
Two trusting hearts in unison to beat.

When holy vows unite the two in one,
The rising sun proclaims the day begun;
The world unto the newly married pair
With radiance is flooded. Fairly tinged,
The threat'ning clouds of sorrow, toil and care,
That in the distance rise, are silver-fringed,
So lustrous is the ray that onward darts,
So hopeful is the love of happy hearts.

Through fifty pleasant, peaceful years of life,
Together, faithfully have man and wife
Their duty done. And now the interlude
Has come. This is the sunset hour. Its light
Is not less beautiful because subdued.
The purple clouds now floating into sight,
Increase the grandeur of the setting sun,
They are the emblems of a vict'ry won.

A noble victory, for they have been
Led by God's grace to triumph over sin;
To patiently endure the little ills
That vex the soul, and fret its peace away.
And now the heart with thankful rapture thrills,

Upon this joyful, golden wedding day,
That God has gently led through sun and rain,
That He has kindly kept through joy and pain.

Now friends with children and grandchildren meet,
These aged Christian travelers to greet,
These parents, looking on their noble sons
And faithful daughters, can but feel
That God has smiled upon their little ones,
For whom they toiled and prayed with trusting zeal.
Their children honor those who gave them birth,
And gratefully recount their parents' worth.

This is the sunset hour. Love's golden beams,
Though not so brilliant as in morning dreams,
With mellow light illume the fading day.
And after sunset, may a long twilight
Of happiness succeed, to pass away
Into a quiet evening star-bedight,
Each star a promise by the Father given,
Their souls to strengthen, cheer and guide to heaven.

FOURTH OF JULY, 1875.

Ring, ring, village bell!
Your thanks for liberty ring,
Awaken the echoes of the wold,
For freedom is ninety-nine years old,
On this Independence day.

Ring, ring, joyful bell!
For liberty peal and ring,
Wild birds are caroling sweet and clear,
And th' bark of the faithful dog I hear,
It is the Fourth of July.

Ring, ring, happy bell!
Cheerily, cheerily ring.
The boys are out for frolic and fun,
The toot of horn and the boom of gun
Welcome the Fourth of July.

Ring, ring, neighb'ring bells!
Of liberty talk and ring;
Talk to each other over the hills,
And th' breeze shall whisper it to the rills,
That gladly ripple to-day.

Ring, ring, all ye bells!
For liberty loudly ring;
All over the Union chant and ring,
In every city chime and sing,
Ring merrily all at once.

Ring, ring, solemn bells!
Slowly and tenderly ring,
Toll mournfully o'er the land your sobs,
For th' heart of a mighty nation throbs
At the memory of her dead.

Ring, ring Union bells!
For freedom thankfully ring,
In a chorus grand your voices raise,
And bear to heaven a hymn of praise,
Of praise to the Lord our King.

VIOLETS.

In a pasture beside the broad Atlantic,
Among the spruces and the rocks gigantic,
Early in balmy May,
A little child at play,
Found by a tiny rivulet,
A solitary violet,
'Neath withered leaves half hid away,
Blue as th' sea on a summer day,
And to her tender heart,
The flower did impart
Mysteriously each year to be renewed,
A flower-love perennial, joy-imbued.

(In the meadow, by the rill,
Sky blue violets grow;
In the wood and on the hill,
Purple violets blow.
Is it purple or blue?

Or a perfect blending of the two
Into elegant violet hue?)

Years passed, and the child to a fair maiden grown,
In a shady retreat was kneeling alone,
And from cool mosses green,
With the twin-vine between,
At the foot of a beech tree old,
Picked violets yellow as gold;
(Amber violets pale and bright
Like varied tints of sunset light),
And sadly thought of him,
Who false to her had been,
And the violets saw the hot tears that fell,
As the maiden pondered alone in the dell.

Each heart has sorrows and pains,
All have burdens to bear;
Because of its penciled veins,
Is th' violet less fair?
Does pain heart-beauty mar?
Or is it purer and sweeter far,
When meekly borne sorrow leaves a scar?

God gives His children strength and grace,
Afflictions to endure,
His fingers the dark veinings trace
Upon heart-petals pure;
And her heart, like a pale golden violet,
Was lovelier for delicate lines like jet,
For, the soul in distress,
She could pity and bless,
And stript of pride and selfishness,
Her heart of beauty had not less;
And one who long her worth had known,
Courted and won her for his own;
His sunshine, helpmeet, wife,
And they their wedded life
Began with mutual love and confidence,
Well mixed with kindness, patience, and common sense.

Love like scent of violets white,
Pleasant, but not too sweet,
For a passionate love and light,
Is certain to be fleet;

It does not calmly bear,
And extenuate the wear and tear,
Of vexing trifles and daily care.

But love that is steady and strong,
And based on common sense,
Will surely yield happiness long,
And hearts that it cements,
Till death will firmly united be,
Nor seek for a new affinity.

Thrice had the apple-tree its tinted snowflakes shed,
Thrice had the wind-flower bloomed since they were wed,
When Sunshine and their boy
Went often to enjoy
The soul-refreshing solitude,
And soothing music of the wood,
To bask in sunlight heaven-sent,
The mother with her lot content,
Having no ambition,
For another mission,

Than that which to wife and mother is given,
The making of home a miniature heaven.

Oft they wandered to the meadow,
  Lingered in the bowers,
Where the sun-besprinkled shadow,
  Flits among the flowers,
Resting the weary feet,
Breathing the genial air replete
With perfume faint of wild flowers sweet;
  And Alfred gathered quickly,
  Dandelions scattered thickly
In the grass, each one a gem,
Snatched the bloom without the stem,
And filled his mother's lap with them.
Brought them in his chubby fist,
  For his mother's pleasure,
And his rosy face she kissed,
  And kept each stemless treasure.

  Then she talked to him of God,
  Who made the flowers that deck the sod,
  Of Him who governs sea and land,

In language he could understand,
While she plucked the blossoms she loved so dearly,
Blue and white violets she gathered yearly,
Placed them in her vases,
Where their pleasant faces,
The beauty of their home enhanced,
And cheered her as at them she glanced,
While she performed with nimble hand
The work her brain before had planned,
Or as from books she sought,
To harvest precious thought,
And garner it, believing it her duty,
To mingle with labor, wisdom and beauty.

O the blessed love of flowers!
How it cheers the lonely heart,
How it shortens weary hours,
What true joy does it impart,
To those who roam,
Where dewdrops gleam
On mossy banks
Of the limpid stream,

That crinkles and turns
To kiss the feet
Of delicate ferns,
That quiver and thrill,
As the bobolinks trill
Their gushing harmony;
And the fascinated rill,
In the hollow, for a moment,
Listens, standing still,
Then echoes the wondrous melody,
As it dances down the hill,

In the country flowers blow,
Freely bloom for great and small
Let them not unheeded grow;
Seek for them, ye mothers all
In the forest
Where nestling vines
Creep and cover
The roots of tall pines,
Whose branches swing,
As the breezes sing

Of quiet and rest,
And smooth the lines
Of care from the brow,
While peace steals into the breast.

Let the children cull them too,
For a flower-love within
The heart, will it with bliss imbue,
Leaving much less room for sin,
O let them rove
In free delight
Through croft and grove,
Where wild-flowers bright
Befleck the ever-waving green
Of dale and lea,
And robins flit the boughs between
Of shrub and tree,
And nature, with manifold voices,
In the wisdom of God rejoices.

In her chamber, pale and weak, the mother lay,
Through the open window came the breath of May,
Delicious and replete

With bird-song wildly sweet,
Mingled with sweeter sounds of glee,
The voices of her children three.
As in the field they early sought
The vernal blossoms which they brought,
On tiptoe to her room,
And left the fragrant bloom,
Softly, while she slept, where, waking, she would see
Their gifts, and say, "Th' dear ones gathered them for me,"
Then in silence went away,
Their father kind to tell,
"They some violets had found,
To make poor mother well."
Each met he with caress,
And said in his heart, "O Lord, I bless
Thy name, that they are not motherless."

For he thought of the day when his wife in th' heat
Of fever, had talked of a quiet retreat,
Where grasses cool should wave
Above a long, low grave,

On which the nightly dews should fall,
O'er which a weeping willow tall,
Should gracefully its branches spread,
And sweetly, sweetly overhead,
The birds would ever sing,
And 'twould be always spring,
And daily fresh violets scattered would be
On the grave, by a man and his children three.
He had deemed that she might pass
Forever from his life;
The mother of his little ones,
His precious, patient wife;
O, could he let her go?
Could he drink the bitter cup of woe?
In weakness he answered, "No, O no!"

"An iron hand all barbed with hooks,
Seems clutching my poor heart;
O Grief, remove thy crushing hand!
O Death, from us depart!

"Roll back thy swift, on-coming flood,
And thy dark billows stay;

The cherished center of our home,
Bear not from earth away!

"The violet within the dell
Would bloom, though she were gone,
The grass would spring, the birds would sing,
But I should be forlorn.

"No more her tender voice to hear,
No more her smile to see!
Our little children motherless,
O no, it must not be!"

Then he thought of each hasty word he had said
To the woman he loved, who would soon be dead.
"O if she could but live,
O if she would forgive
Each unkind word! Too late, too late,
Our home will soon be desolate!
And can I, must I say 'Goodby'?
O Lord, her God, to Thee I cry!
O grant me grace to bow
Submissive to Thee now!

O God! to my heart teach the pray'r of Thy Son,
Not my will, not my will, but Thine, Lord, be done."

But the danger now was past;
The awful rushing tide
Of death had turned, and she with them
Yet longer could abide.
He felt his bosom thrill
With joy, for the wife and mother still
Her place in their happy home would fill;
And his heart sent up its tribute of praise
To God, for the lengthening of her days.

AN AFTERTHOUGHT.

Mud, mud, and a shallow stream and small,
So sluggish it hardly moves at all
Where steeple-bushes stand stiff and bare,
But gurgles a little just out there
By the oil-nut, where it trickles down
Over the stones and the oak leaves brown,
Down to the mosses so green below;
But here you can scarcely hear it flow;
It halts in ev'ry hollow and track,
And the mud is soft and deep and black.

Ah, that was a month ago! now look!
The halting stream is almost a brook,
And the mud is nowhere to be seen,
For the clear rill flows o'er grasses green.
Now look again! and what have you found?
Sweet white violets blooming around;
Fair and sweet in each hollow and track,

And sweet and pure where the mire was black.
O, little you thought, a month ago,
That these fragrant treasures here would blow!

Well! places of a similar kind,
In our lives, we're pretty sure to find.
We look at the mud and fret and sigh,
No good can we see; but, by and by,
If we can wait—if we will but look,
The truth shall flow like a limpid brook.
Yes, if we look, we shall surely see
The grasses bend where the stream runs free:
From blackest mire we may gather yet
A beautiful, fragrant violet.

TO WHITTIER ON HIS SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY, DEC. 17, 1877.

The poets have woven thee a crown,
Thy praises the people sing;
May I bring thee from thy native town,
A wild-flower offering?

A few green ferns, a buttercup bright,
And violets blue as th' skies,
From fields where the "Barefoot Boy" once played,
Methinks thou wilt not despise.

O, sweet is the sound of th' laughing brook,
And the whisper of the breeze,
And carol of birds, but sweeter far,
Thy melody is than these.

O, grand is the awful thunder's voice,
Grand is the boom of the sea,

But not less grand is th' voice of a man
Who speaketh for liberty.

As pure as the calla's waxen cup,
Is the record of thy years;
And a calm, unshaken trust in God,
On every page appears.

And old Pentucket may well be proud
Of her noble-hearted son,
And add her humble offering,
To the garlands thou hast won.

THE LAST NIGHT OF THE YEAR.

The few remaining moments
  Of th' year are going fast,
'Tis meet to pause and ponder
  Upon its moments past,
And backward o'er our pathway,
  A searching look to cast.

This year has not much differed
  From other happy years,
We've had no great affliction,
  And it to me appears,
We've had a year of sunshine,
  Few troubles and few tears.

Our God has sent us blessings
  Unnumbered, ev'ry day;
His hand has gently held us,
  Nor suffered us to stray

Far into sin, but led us
To trust Him day by day.

Our home has not been entered
By death, we all are here;
Our children have been healthy
Throughout the present year;
And you, dear wife, my helpmeet!
Have filled our home with cheer.

We've had our little trials,
Each day has brought its care;
Sometimes we've been impatient,
Forgotten to forbear;
Of murmuring and fretting,
I know I've done my share.

Sometimes we've spoken harshly
Words we should not have said,
And afterward repented,
And tears of sorrow shed;
But each has each forgiven,
All unkind words are dead.

We've oft neglected duty,
And oft unfaithful been,
Our hearts like untilled gardens,
Are full of weeds within,
But Jesus' blood can cleanse us
From all indwelling sin.

And now we'll kneel together,
To him our sins will tell;
We'll thank God for His goodness,
He hath done all things well.
The old year is departing,
Farewell, old year, farewell!

THANKS.

To my Sabbath-school class for a silver butter-dish, Jan., 1876.

This silver gift has spoken
Your kind regard for me,
I thank you for the token
Of friendship; it will be
A magic glass, in which my class
I evermore shall see.

Eight animated faces,
As yet untouched by care,
And many winning graces,
And aspirations fair,
Hearts true and pure, all these I'm sure,
I find reflected there.

And mirrored in it plainly,
Can I refuse to see

The truths (I hope not vainly),
You've oft rehearsed to me?
O, may my life with deeds be rife,
That shall with them agree.

IN OCTOBER.

The morning air is sweet,
And with melody replete;
The chirp of cricket, hum of bee,
The cheerful song of chickadee,
The low of kine upon the ridge,
The softened rumbling of the bridge,
The distant engine's whistle shrill,
That wakes the echoes of the hill,
The shouts of schoolboys far away,
The bell that calls them from their play,
The pleasant rustling of the leaves
In arbors, where the wild grape weaves
A tangled roof of fruit and vine;
The zephyrs sighing through the pine,
The tinkling where the waters meet,
Unite in harmony complete.

Clear is the soft blue sky,
Save where, in the east, there lie
Thin clouds, the dainty veil of white
Lost off by Summer in her flight.
O'er hill and dale, from chilling breath
Of Autumn, whispering of death,
She fled, and as she swiftly passed,
Her mantle on the trees she cast,
And, as Elijah's mantle, fraught
With power, to Elisha brought
His spirit doubled, so hers came,
And set the forests all aflame
With gorgeous tints, and now they blaze
As though condensed were all the rays
Of sunshine, that to June were giv'n,
And through the trees sent back to heav'n.

But listen! what is that?
That shivering rat-tat-tat,
That rustling full of pathos wild,
As the sad sobbings of a child
Who yearns for words of tenderness,

So oft denied the motherless?
See! yonder elm has loosed its hold
Upon its ripened leaves of gold,
And cast them as a poet strows
His golden thoughts. A light wind blows
The quivering leaves which moan and cry,
As in the air they whirl and fly,
Pause, tremble, flutter and descend,
While through bare boughs the soft winds send
A prelude to what is to be,
When wailing tempests strip each tree.

And do you question whence
Cometh the sweet influence
That permeates all things, as dew
Invisibly steals in and through
The thirsty leaf, the wilting flow'r?
It is the tranquilizing pow'r
Of Summer over Autumn shed,
Like that which long survives the dead,
And when our dear ones from us go,
Alleviates the bitter woe

That else would crush us. They are not;
Yet from the world, death cannot blot
Their influence, and mem'ry still,
With their sweet presence seems to fill
Our homes, as summer now pervades
Hills, valleys, fields, and forest glades.

THE SONG OF THE SEA.

I sit within a shady nook,
And listen to the shallow brook
That slowly ripples by,
It faintly tinkles at my feet,
A song with gladsome sounds replete,
Nor breathes a pensive sigh;
But I long, I long to hear the song
Of the mighty waves which roll along
The Atlantic shore;—the awful crash
Of breakers that foam and roar and dash;
The song of the restless, heaving sea,
Is the grandest of all songs to me.

I hear the whisper of the breeze,
That lightly through o'erarching trees,
Sends music soft and low;
I hear the joyous caroling
Of birds that make the wild-wood ring,
Their songs are sweet, I know;

But O, I long for the solemn song
Of surging billows, which break along
The Atlantic shore;—the thunder deep,
Of rock-met surges, that wildly leap
High into air. O, dear unto me,
Is the ceaseless moan of the rolling sea.

IF IN THE SUMMER I SHOULD DIE.

If in the summer I should die,
When shrouded for the grave I lie,
O gather from some quiet dell
The sweet wild flowers I love so well,
The ferns and vines and mosses green,
And place them my cold hands between;
Their loveliness I shall not see,
Their fragrance will not waken me.
But to the living they will say,
"Although we perish and decay,
When God shall call us from the skies,
We from the dust shall quickly rise
To blossom in some quiet dell,
Forever with the Lord to dwell."

DECORATION DAY.

[Song and Response.]

This is a day of peace!
Let party hatred cease,
And bitter strife.
Let Peace her scepter sway!
Throughout our land to-day,
May pride be swept away
And love be rife.

Response—

This day shall party wrangling cease;
To-day, our watchword shall be Peace.

Our nation will to-day,
A floral tribute lay
On each low grave,
Of those who fought so well,
Rebellious foes to quell,

Who bravely fought, but fell,
Our land to save.

Response—

We decorate each soldier's grave,
Who gave his life our land to save.

They fought for liberty!
What the result would be
They could not see.
They died, but not in vain,
Their death was freedom's gain,
For, broken is the chain
Of slavery.

Response—

Our comrades, dying, could not see,
Which side would gain the victory.

Long may our banner float
O'er graves near and remote,
Where rest the brave;
And while of them we sing,

Our grateful offering
Of garlands bright, we bring
For every grave.

Response—

And as we deck the soldier's grave,
We pray, may God the Union save.

A KEEPSAKE.

To Miss M. E. N.

I have among my keepsakes,
A little gift of hair,
All deftly wound and woven
Into leaves and blossoms fair;
The words "My Class" are written,
One word on either side
Of th' knot of rosy ribbon,
With which the flowers are tied.

My class! for which I deem it
A treasure fair to own,
For that I highly prize it,
But 'tis not for that alone.
This precious gift of flowers,
Most lovingly I hold,
For, here the friend who made it,
I shall never more behold.

With slender, wasted fingers,
And failing strength she wrought;
Ah! who knows but Death's message
Was the sooner to her brought
Because of this? Oh, sadly
I gaze on it to-day,
And fast my tears are falling,
For the girl who passed away.

She and her sister, often,
Together came to read
With me, of Bunyan's Pilgrim,
Or the valiant word and deed
Of knights of good King Arthur,
And many poems sweet;—
Her sister, in the twilight,
Now, alone, comes up the street.

Wild birds are sweetly warbling,
Among the forest trees;
We used to sing together,
With her hands upon the keys;

Her cheeks the warm blood flushing,
  Methinks I see her now,
Her eyes so brightly beaming,
  And dark ringlets on her brow.

I miss her, but in heaven
  I hope again to see
The friend, whose wasted fingers
  Made this Christmas gift for me.
And heaven will be the dearer,
  If, at its pearly gate,
To greet me at my coming,
  She will watch for me, and wait.

A FAREWELL.

Presented to Dea. and Mrs. J. D. jr., on the death of their daughter, Grace Mabel, who died April 8, 1878, aged six years, eight months.

Weary so soon? poor little one!
Her tender feet had just begun
Life's pleasant paths to tread.
Weary! an angel brought relief
To her, but filled our hearts with grief;
Our darling child is dead.

God knows it all. His ways are best,
The soul, in trusting Him, is blest;
The wounded, bleeding heart
His love can heal,—but yet, to-day,
Our tears must fall, and lips will say,
'Tis hard with her to part.

And yet we must! Dear little Grace!
Her soul has found its resting-place,
God doeth all things well.
We fold her hands across her breast,
And lay the dear form down to rest,
Farewell, sweet child, farewell.

THE MESSAGE.

Did you call me? Was I dreaming? It was long
before daybreak,
In the stillness of the morning, ere the robins
were awake.

I was sleeping, soundly sleeping, when your ear-
nest, pleading call,
'Woke me, coming through the silence, though I
heard no sound at all.

Not a syllable was uttered, and you called me
not by name,
But I waited for the message, and from you to
me it came.

As the permeating sunshine of a clear October
day,
Wraps the earth in mellow glory, driving chilly
mists away,

Till the violets of springtime bloom again beside
the rill,
So your silent, unseen message did its mission
sweet fulfil.

All the chilly apprehensions vanished quickly out
of sight,
And the happy thoughts upspringing, blossomed
welcome to the light.

As the trav'ler passing onward in the last days
of July,
By its own delightful fragrance, knows the ground-
nut vine is nigh,

So I knew that you were near me, near in spirit,
near in thought,
By the pleasant, mystic perfume of the message
to me brought;

And I knew that when I met you, you would
greet me with a smile,
And my heart would beat more lightly, for the
harbinger, meanwhile.

OVER HIS NARROW BED.

Song.

Over his narrow bed
  Wintry winds are sweeping,
Over the new-made grave
  Where my boy is sleeping.
Cease, then, ye cruel winds!
  Cease your doleful sighing,
Blow softly o'er the grave,
  Where my boy is lying.

No longer can I bear
  Your dirge, wild and dreary;
Deep is his grave and cold,
  I am sad and weary;
O, then ye wintry winds!
  Cease your dismal crying,
Make not more dark the grave
  Where my boy is lying.

WHEN THE NODDING LILIES BLOSSOM.

Where the hill slopes to the river,
Tall and stately, in the grass,
Grow the pleasant, nodding lilies,
You can see them, as you pass
At a distance, by the gleaming,
As the breezes sink and swell,
By the gleaming in the sunlight,
Of each swaying, golden bell.

You have heard the bells a-chiming
In some far-off city tow'r?
Have you heard the sweeter music
Which accompanies this flow'r,
As it vibrates, nods and trembles
On its slender, graceful stem,

As it swings among the grasses,
Like a precious diadem?

No? then close your eyes and listen!
Let your inmost senses drink
All the trilling, tuneful sweetness,
Of yon merry bobolink!
O, you hear that song, my farmer,
All the busy haying time,
And these lilies wave and quiver
To his mellow, rippling chime.

You remember how we wandered
Round the hill one sunny day,
By the barley, through the red-top,
Picking lilies on the way?
How the river wavelets sparkled,
How the birds sang out their joy!
And beside us, birds-nest hunting,
Trudged a little barefoot boy.

Ah! if sometime in the future,
Death should take me from you, then,
When the nodding lilies blossom,
You will gather them again;
Just a few, because I loved them
In the happy, bygone days,
When we walked in peace together,
In life's fair, sequestered ways.

A REPLY.

To Mrs. L. M. D.

My lily was a simple gift, yet glad
Am I that with it you were pleased. You speak
Of memories that shall make glad my heart
When I am old; the thought of deeds well done.
Alas! I fear it will not be; for, deeds
That I should do, are often left undone,
And when I would do good, some evil thought.
Perchance of self-sufficiency, or fear
Of misconstruction, from the good detracts,
Or hinders it. But howsoe'er may seem
My own life held in retrospect, I know
The memory of you, my aged friend,
And your long life of loving usefulness
Within the church, or at your own fireside,
(So free from stain, that in the dozen years
That I have been your neighbor, not one word,
Condemning act of yours, has reached my ear),

Will be to me a flow'r more fair and sweet,
Than all the fairest lilies of the earth.
When dies the flow'r, its perfume also dies;
But fragrance of a life like yours, will live,
How long, eternity alone can tell.

LINES.

In memory of Daisy Patterson.

Through all the land, on charger fleet,
There rides an archer bold,
He pauses not for wind or sleet,
He minds not heat or cold.
He gallops all the dreary night,
Adown the world's highway,
Alike to him the dark and light,
As speeds he on his way.

With steady hand his bow he bends,
With aim unerring, dart
The poisoned arrows, which he sends
Directly to the heart.
Nor turns aside this warrior bold
For kings his charger pale,
He recks not of the rich man's gold,
He heeds not sorrow's wail.

A flow'r among us fair and sweet,
A few short summers blushed,
But onward came the pale horse fleet,
His foot our Daisy crushed.
Our hearts are sad. Our eyes will fill
With tears, as we deplore
The loss of one, who, cold and still,
Sleeps now, to wake no more.

No more? But there will come a day,
When Death shall conquered be,
When he no more the world's highway
Will ride, so bold and free.
Sleeps? But the spirit goes to God;
Our faith must look above
The gloomy grave, the frozen sod,
To God, for He is love.

Not always will the grave retain
Its victims, they will rise,
When Christ to earth shall come again
Triumphant, from the skies.

The Nazarene victorious
  Once died, but lives again,
He 'll vanquish Death, and, glorious
  In majesty, shall reign.

A MEDLEY.

Strung together from Longfellow's Table of Contents.

"The Evening Star" is shining
Over "The Hemlock Tree,"
"The Spanish Jew" is telling
"The Secret of the Sea,"
To "Hawthorne" wise, who listens
Within "The Wayside Inn,"
While mournfully are tolling
The solemn "Bells of Lynn."

"The Sea hath its Pearls," and "Flowers"
Are blooming far below,
"The Birds of Passage" are singing
While "The Four Winds" softly blow,
"To a Driving Cloud" above them,
"The Song of the Silent Land,"
And "Victor Galbraith" kindles
A "Driftwood Fire" on the sand.

Beside "The Open Window,"
"Sir Humphrey Gilbert" stands,
Humming "A Christmas Carol,"
A "Sonnet" in his hands.
And "Blind Bartimeus" mutters,
"It is not always May;"
While "Th' Village Blacksmith" slumbers
Serenely o'er the way.

"King Christian" tells the story
Of "Ride of Paul Revere,"
"The Norman Baron" whispers
In "Lady Wentworth's" ear,
"The Legend of the Crossbill,"
They cut "Two Locks of Hair,"
"The Wraith of Odin" tells it,
The "Landlord" cries "Beware!"

"The Quadroon Girl" now enters,
"The Ghosts" are chased away.
"Miles Standish" says "To-morrow"
Will be "The Wedding Day."

"The Old Clock on the Stairs" has stopped!
'Tis "Daybreak" now I fear,
"A Gleam of Sunshine" greets us,
"The Witnesses" are here.

"Evangeline!" why wilt thou
In "Maidenhood" repine?
I offer "Love and Friendship,"
O, let me call thee mine!
"Priscilla" turn "Th' Spinning Wheel,"
You'll be "John Alden's wife;"
We'll smoke "The Peace Pipe" now, friends,
And sing "The Psalm of Life."

LINES.

Written for the fifth anniversary of the marriage of Rev. and Mrs. H. A. Stetson, Oct. 18th, 1881.

Life is an unknown region, over which
In quick succession, sons of Adam pass,
Nor e'er their steps retrace, however dark
The course ahead, or bright may seem the path
Once trodden. Some, in passing, find their way
By pleasant streams, through fertile fields and fair,
Some climb the rugged steep, and walk where yawns
The frightful chasm, oft stumbling as they go,
And some through swamps and forests crawl, beset
By beasts and reptiles loathsome. Others press
O'er barren, scorching sands. But, whoso will
Some good may find, an Elim by the way,
Or Bethel, like the patriarch of old,
A priceless treasure for the mind to hold.

Five years of close companionship may now
Our pastor and his wife review. They may,
Perchance, have passed through some ravines, where light
But faintly struggled through o'er-arching gloom,
And distant thunders growled; but, in the main,
Have traversed goodly land. And now, we trust
In pastures green they will be led by Him
For whom they toil. May fruits abundant fill
The hands that sow the seed; and when they reach
The journey's end, may life eternal be
Their portion, joys transcending these, and bliss
Unspeakable. May they together sing
In heav'n the glories of their Priest and King.

THE OLD HOUSE O'ER THE WAY.

When the toiler's task is ended,
And the twilight cool and gray,
On him like a benediction
Falls, at closing of the day,
Out of doors, in groups or singly,
Sit we, looking at the west,
With its pink and golden splendor,
Chatting, musing, all at rest.

The oriole, thrush and redbreast
Now are out of sight and still,
But the frogs rehearse their music
To a distant whip-po-will,
And the swallows fast are flying
(Jolly little fellows they),
Chattering, they dart and flutter
Round the old house o'er the way.

But the old house! Have you seen it,
Picturesque, and quaint and gray,
Built when red men came a-prowling
Down the famous twelve-rod way?
Strongly built of brick from England,
White oak timber, iron bolts,
But a little from the river
Rocks and ferry, then called Holt's.

Years before, the stalwart fathers
Ordered, "a highway be laid
From the country bridge to ferry,
Down the valley," and 'twas made.
Rough the cart-path, wild the forest,
And adown the Merrimac,
Swiftly came the birch-bark, bearing
Savage on the white man's track.

But the paleface grew and flourished,
All undaunted, went not hence,
But the Garrison erected,
For a shelter and defense.

Thick the walls, and dark the cellar,
Narrow windings underground,
Where could linger the faint-hearted,
While the Indian whooped around.

Two large chimneys, just in fashion,
Closets, port-holes, attics drear,
Spacious rooms, where met the Quakers
In convention, year by year.
O, the house was well defended!
Wives and children there could rest,
And the white man grew and prospered
While the red man traveled west.

But the mansion changed its owners;
Generations came and went;
Echoed there the voice of sadness,
Joy, love, woe and discontent.
O, the many, many footsteps
Echoing along the floor!
There, to woo her backward lover,
Went the proud Miss Livermore.

Made by man, yet man outlasting,
(If a man's life measured be,
By his days on earth, so fleeting),
Old and quaint, yet fair to see.
Lofty elms reach far above it,
Nests are hidden by the leaves,
Smooth the greensward, sweet the lilacs,
Climbing up to kiss the eaves.

And that willow, neat and glossy,
For a century or more,
Has its yellow catkins scattered
Lavishly, before the door;
'Twas a walking stick, and planted
In the twilight, by a beau,
As a token to the lady
Whom he courted, long ago.

Could it speak, perchance 'twould tell us
Some love tales not quite so old!
But the sweet words, 'neath its branches
Whispered, by it are not told.

Green the meadow in the background,
Where the flow'rs all summer blow,
Green the hillside just beyond it,
Where the plums and berries grow.

O, we love the ancient beauty
Of the place across the way,
And we often gaze upon it
At the closing of the day,
Till the bats come with the darkness,
Till the night is growing chill,
And the birds are all a-sleeping,
Save the plaintive whip-po-will.

THE LEGACY

"I am going to make my will," you said.
With a laugh and jest I turned aside;
"O, remember me in your will, my friend,
And give me your old straw hat," I cried.

Light were the words, but a quiver of pain
I felt as I quickly walked away,
And I thought the gift I should most desire,
Were you to be called from this world to-day—

I should wish with others the hope to share
That Christ had welcomed you as his own—
But I said the gift I should most desire
To hold and cherish as mine alone,

Is this—the assurance that naught unkind
Had resting-place in your thoughts of me,
So I could know that between us was peace,
Should I live your pale, dead face to see.

THE GUARDIAN ANGEL.

"Bring in my little ones, that I may look
Upon them, once again before I die.
Death is not far away. A few more days
And I shall be at rest, and free from pain,
And they, my children, will be motherless.
Too young are they to realize the loss
Of mother-love, but there will come a time,
When all in vain, their aching hearts will cry
For mother, mother-love and sympathy
Which she alone can give. O little girls!
How can I leave you in this cruel world,
Where fierce temptations oft beset; where life
Is one long struggle 'twixt the right and wrong,
And oft the wrong prevails. I hope that they,
My darlings will be valiant in the fight,
While leaning on the Everlasting Arm,
Which has been my support. The Arm that will
Uphold me, while I take my last, last look

Of their dear faces, press a last fond kiss
Upon the lips that plaintively will call,
Dear mamma, mamma, when I shall be dead.
O God! forsake me not in this dark hour,
But some sweet promise through the deep'ning gloom
Like sunshine send, lest I, at thy decree
Should murmur, being weak. Thou wilt forgive
The yearning of the mother-heart, that clings
So fondly to these helpless ones, for Thou
Art merciful. Compassionate Thou art
And dost not willingly afflict. To Thee
I leave my children. Thou for them wilt care,
With love surpassing mine, and knowing this,
I can lie down in peace."

Each child was led
Into the room, and placed upon the bed,
And closely folded in a long embrace,
Kissed many times, but only this she said,
"I want you always to be good." They came,
Light-hearted, smiling, pleased again to be
In mother's room; "Is mamma almost well?"

They went with quiv'ring lips, "Must mamma die?"
Their father, keeping down his anguish, soothed
With loving words, their hearts, and they, engaged
Ere long in childish sports, their grief forgot.

This painful trial o'er, the mother lay
With closéd eyes, too weak to think, and save
The quick chest-heaving, motionless. Her soul
Communing with its God found peace. The sun
Low-sinking in the west, shone in and touched
Her hands, as if to place within, a ray
Of glory from the world of light unseen.
From Jenness beach, the dear familiar sound
Of rising and retreating waves, came like
The solemn chanting of an evening prayer,
And lulled her into rest.

A few short days
She lingered, bade adieu to other friends,
And last, to him, her husband. Suddenly
A radiance o'erspread her features thin,
And looking upward, she exclaimed, "I see
The angels, they are coming!" Then she died,

And in the yard near by they made a grave,
And laid her down to rest; and ere two years
Had come and gone, was made another grave
Beside the first. The husband by his wife
Lay sleeping, and,—the children were alone.
Alone! and from their happy home, were led
To walk in diverse paths not always smooth,
But leading oft o'er jagged rocks, and steep
And slippery; and oft the hand out-stretched
To grasp for aid some wayside branch, would find
Itself thorn-wounded, and with briars pierced.
But now and then, a friendly voice would speak
Words of encouragement and sympathy;
Then easy was the way, and firm the step.
But when Temptation whispered, "Come with me,
This way is pleasant, walk therein," a voice,
A tender, pleading voice, would seem to say,
"I want you always to be good." Then, like
The lightning's flash, would come a memory
Of the sick mother's parting kiss, and then
To heav'n for help, would rise the swift appeal,
And strength to say, "I will not walk therein,"

Would given be. As when, among the hills
A strain of music clear and sweet, grows faint,
And fainter, till it dies, these words would seem
To rise and float into the far beyond;
"Thy angel mother guards thee. God has heard
Her pray'rs. Trust thou in Him. She beckons thee,
O turn not from the way." And then the path
Led through delightful meadows, glorious
With light celestial, and the heart grew brave.

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bought Mrs. Cunningham –

8-2-36 –

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